**NICCY Publication Scheme**

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| Author(s) | Human Resources |
| Date written/revised | 23 February 2017 |
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| Date: CE Approval | 6 March 2017 |
| Date: Board Meeting | 30 March 2017 |
| Next review date | February 2018 |
| Target Audience | All Staff and Website for Public Information |

**WARNING:** Always ensure that you are using the most up to date policy or procedure document. If you are unsure, you can check that it is the most up to date version by checking with the HR Officer.

**To be completed when reviewing an existing policy.**

If the policy has been reviewed without change this information will still need to be recorded although the version number will remain the same.

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Brief Summary of Change** |
| 3.0 | Feb 17 | Periodic Review as per schedule |
| 2.0 | Jul 15 | Revised July 2015 |
| 1.0 | Feb 14 | Original Document  |

**INTRODUCTION**

This publication scheme is a guide to the information routinely published by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY).

It sets out the information NICCY will publish, how and when it will do so, and whether this information will be available free of charge or on payment. The classes of information to be published are set out under clearly defined headings which reflect the categories of information provided by NICCY.

**BACKGROUND**

As a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) NICCY is required under the Freedom of Information Act to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme setting out the classes of information it holds, the manner in which it publishes/intends to publish the information and the charges it intends to make for the information.

As an NDPB NICCY is committed to the highest standards of accountability and openness and this Publication Scheme has been prepared to enable NICCY to fulfil its obligations under the legislation and to help the public to know what information NICCY makes available. The information referred to in the Scheme will be made available to individuals on request under the terms indicated in the Scheme.

Under the Freedom of Information Act an individual has the right to request information which is not included in this Publication Scheme.

Overall responsibility for this Publication Scheme rests with the Chief Executive of NICCY

**NOTES ON USING THE SCHEME**

Publication does not refer solely to printed material. Publication has been interpreted as broadly as possible to include, for example, electronic documents, information included on the website, minutes of meetings, reports and leaflets.

It is intended, as far as possible, to make material available on NICCY’s website on an ongoing basis ([www.niccy.org](http://www.niccy.org)). If an individual does not have access to the internet a single print-out of a specific page will be provided on request.

**HOW DO I GET INFORMATION?**

A wide range of the information can be found our website at [www.niccy.org](http://www.niccy.org). Where information is not on the website or if you cannot access the website, NICCY will arrange for you to have the material sent to you or for you to visit our offices, if that is easier.

In most cases immediate access can be provided via email but in cases where the information is being sent out to you by post, this will be undertaken within 5 working days of receipt of your request. Should you seek a visit to our offices, or should this be required due to the nature of the information, you will be contacted within 5 working days to arrange a mutually convenient appointment.

NICCY can also make information available in a range of alternative formats.

Information held by NICCY, which is not provided under this Scheme, can be requested in writing and its provision will be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, within 20 working days of the request.

**CHARGING AND COPYRIGHT ISSUES**

NICCY has determined four categories for charging for information requested under this Scheme as follows:

***i Free of Charge***

This includes general facts and information on the services NICCY provide as well as information published on NICCY’s website (for those without internet access, a single print-out of the specific website content can be requested). It also includes answering telephone queries, providing copies of free leaflets and inspection of reference materials at NICCY’s office.

***ii Priced Publications***

Where the information required is available in a priced publication, details of the publication, its cost and where it will be supplied.

***iii Photocopying and postage costs***

This covers information which has already been prepared which we can photocopy or print from a computerised records. Where the information is only available on our website, NICCY can provide a single printed copy of the information. Where the cost of photocopying and/or postage of material is likely to exceed £20, NICCY reserves the right to charge the estimated amount and to require payment of this amount in advance of carrying out the work.

***iv Professional charges for locating and preparing information for release***

When preparing or gathering the required material to answer an individual’s request can only be done by specialists or other professionals at a charge to NICCY, a written estimate will be given of the cost of providing such information. The cost will have to be paid in advance.

When NICCY receives your payment, we will keep you informed about when the information will be sent to you. No charges will be made where a request for information is refused. There will be no charge to appeal against a refusal to supply requested information. Nor will there be a charge to appeal against any charges made for requested information.

Where the information falls within a charging category shown above, details of how charges are calculated can be found in NICCY’s Charging Structure for Information provided under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which is included in this Publication Scheme.

Anyone seeking information that cannot be found on the website should contact NICCY at:

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Equality House

7-9 Shaftesbury Square

Belfast

BT2 7DP

Tel: 028 9031 1616

E-mail: info@niccy.org

**THE STATIONERY OFFICE**

Further information of interest to you may be published by The Stationery Office (TSO) and may be viewed free of charge on the HMSO website ([www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)). Printed copies are available to order (upon payment of the applicable price) from the Stationery Office’s website ([www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)), and TSO shops in major towns and cities across the UK.

**FEEDBACK**

We have published this scheme to fulfil our obligations under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and also ensure that you, the public, are more aware of the type of information which is available from NICCY.

The purpose of the Act is to promote greater openness by public authorities. It is important therefore that the scheme meets your needs. Our aim is therefore to make the information easy for you to find and use. We welcome suggestions for additional information that you feel should be included or how we can make the information easier to obtain. We would also welcome suggestions as to how the publications themselves could be improved.

Any questions, comments, suggestions or complaints about this scheme should be sent in writing to NICCY’s Freedom of Information and Data Protection Officer.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHEME CONTACT:**

Human Resources Officer

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Equality House

7-9 Shaftesbury Square

Belfast BT2 7DP

Tel: 028 9031 1616

Fax: 028 9031 4545

Email: info@niccy.org

**YOUR RIGHT TO INFORMATION**

In most cases you will be able to obtain the information you seek simply by consulting NICCY’s website or contacting us (see contact details above).

In the event that you do need to seek to obtain information from us under the Freedom of Information Act, here is what you should do:

**MAKING A REQUEST**

* Make your request in writing or email
* The request should contain:
	+ details about the specific information you are seeking
	+ details about who you are and how you can be contacted. In the event of complex requests or potentially sensitive information a telephone number at which you can be contacted would be helpful.
	+ how you would like to receive the information, e.g. as a copy, summary or by physically inspecting the record. Please identify any accessibility requirements you may have and if you need to receive the information in an alternative format, e.g. large print, tape, Braille, etc.

Make your request to our Freedom of Information and Data Protection Officer (details above).

**OUR RESPONSE**

NICCY will respond to your request promptly and, in any event, within 20 working days.

**MAKING A COMPLAINT**

If you are dissatisfied with how NICCY has handled your request for information (or, for example, the response from NICCY is not issued within 20 days) you may use the NICCY’s complaints procedure.

Complaints of this nature will be investigated at Stage 2 initially, with further appeal to a Senior Manager under Stage 3 if required. In the first instance, you should contact the Senior Officer within the department from which the information was originally sought. If you require assistance with identifying the most appropriate person or further information on the complaints procedure generally, you should contact the Human Resources on 028 9031 1616 or e-mail info@niccy.org .

If you remain dissatisfied with how NICCY has handled your request, you can seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for an independent review should be made in writing to:

The Information Commissioner’s Office NI
51 Adelaide Street

Belfast

BT2 8FE

Telephone: 028 9026 9380
Fax: 028 9026 9388
Email: ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk

The Information Commissioner has indicated that an internal review must normally be completed before an appeal may be made for an independent review.

**CLASSES OF INFORMATION**

This section of the publication scheme lists the classes of information that NICCY produces both internally and externally. The classification is based on the guidance contained in the Information Commissioners model publication scheme for Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs).

The information includes material which has been conventionally published in hard copy, material that is available on the website or, on request, in paper copy, and information which we use internally, for example, employment policies and information used for corporate governance.

NICCY has an ongoing programme to place much of the information on its website and much of it already is. Any of the information, whether on the website or not, can be made readily available to the public. Further guidance is given in our Information Guide.

Our information has been classified under the following headings:

* Who we are and what we do;
* What We Spend and How We Spend It;
* What are NICCY’s Priorities and How are We Doing;
* How NICCY Makes Decisions;
* Policies and Procedures;
* Lists and Registers; and
* The Services we offer.

**WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO**

**OUR ROLE AND REMIT**

NICCY was established under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (hereafter ‘the 2003 Order’). NICCY was set up as an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). The Commissioner’s full designated powers took effect from 1 October 2003. Article 6(1) of the 2003 Order established the Commissioner’s principal aim as: “to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young persons”.

NICCY’s Sponsoring Department is the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. NICCY has agreed a Management Statement with OFMDFM which sets out the relationship between the two organisations and defines the financial and administrative framework within which NICCY operates. It is supplemented by a Financial Memorandum and both documents are available on NICCY’s website.

Information below details how NICCY manages its business - the structure of NICCY; its business plans and principal policies; reports commissioned on behalf of NICCY; and its equality scheme are set out

**CHARGES:**

Information is provided free of charge unless a (£) symbol appears beside the document’s name. Where the symbol is shown the cost is at the rate shown in the NICCY’s Charging Structure for Information provided under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**AVAILABILITY COLUMN:**

Documents can be obtained from the department of NICCY shown below on request by post or telephone during office hours.

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| **CLASS OF INFORMATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | **AVAILABILITY** |
| *Management Structure* | Who’s who in the management of NICCY; the Commissioner, Chief Executive, Senior Management Team, and other senior managers. Information on membership of other public bodies where senior officers represent NICCY’s interests.  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb SiteE-mail  |
| *Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Structure*  | The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of NICCY; their roles and responsibilities.  | Post NICCY Office Web SiteE-mail |
| *Business Plans*  | The coming year’s business objectives and targets for NICCY; also its longer term vision and strategic plan.  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb Page E-mail  |
| *Events Planned for the Current Financial Year*  | Events/Campaigns/Promotions planned, organised or funded by NICCY during the current financial year, including contact details.  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb Page E-mail:  |
| *Equality Scheme*  | How NICCY will fulfil its duty under Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act by putting equality and good relations at the heart of policy decisions  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb Page E-mail:  |
| *Annual Report*  | The Annual Report includes the Annual Accounts and details progress against objectives and targets throughout the past year.  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb Page E-mail:  |
| *Reports & Investigations Commissioned by NICCY* | From time to time, NICCY may commission various studies and investigations. These are the published reports produced as a result  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb Page E-mail:  |
| *Complaints Policy & Procedures*  | Information on how to make a complaint on any aspect of the NICCY’s services or facilities.  | Post NICCY OfficeWeb Page E-mail:  |

**WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT**

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

The general framework within which we manage our financial arrangements is set out in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum agreed with OFMDFM and both these documents are published on our website.

Details on the financial outturn is contained in our yearly Annual Report and Accounts. The Annual Report contains a full Remuneration Report, which sets out details of payments and allowances to senior staff.

NICCY’s financial reporting system can report on expenditure by department or individual objective, which may allow the identification of specific projects or events. Specific requests may be made through our Freedom of Information and Data Protection Officer.

Although not civil servants, NICCY staff are graded and paid on the basis of Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) general terms and conditions and have equivalent pension arrangements. Staff allowances, such as payment for travel and subsistence are also based on NICS arrangements. NICS pay scales and subsistence rates are available on the DFP website.

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| **CLASS OF INFORMATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | **RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS** | **AVAILABILITY** |
| *NICCY Accounts* | Financial data by department | Annual ReportCorporate Plan | On request |
| *Annual Budgets* | Planned income and expenditure for each department for the next financial year. | Annual Report  | On request |
| *Rates and**Allowances* | Schedule of rates and allowances payable to staff while undertaking NICCY business during the current and preceding financial years. This class does not include personal claims made by staff.  | Annual Report  | On request |
| *Travelling and Subsistence Payments to staff* | Records of travelling and subsistence payments made to staff while undertaking NICCY business during the current and preceding financial years. | Annual Report  | On request |

**PROCUREMENT PRACTICES**

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| **CLASS OF INFORMATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | **RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS** | **AVAILABILITY** |
| *Tendering Procedures* | Information on NICCY’s purchasingarrangements including tendering procedures. | MSFMFinancial ProceduresAny CPD material | On request |
| *Tender Reports* | Summary reports on each tenderawarded by NICCY. *(Some of the**information in this class is derived from**documents considered to contain exempt**information. See Section 5 ‘Exempt**Information’ above. For example, this**class may include information provided in**confidence or covered by commercial**interest and trade secrets.)* | As produced | On request |

**CORPORATE AND BUSINESS PLANS**

NICCY’s Corporate and annual Business Plans can be found on the website as can its Annual Report and Accounts.

NICCY’s performance against key targets is reported each year in the Annual Report.

**MINUTES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND ARAC MEETINGS**

NICCY will make available, approved minutes and supporting papers of all meetings where decisions are made. These will be published following the next meeting when the minutes are approved. On the same basis NICCY will also make available minutes of its Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meetings.

Questions relating to these and requests for additional information or supporting material should be raised in the first instance with the Corporate Services team

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Policies and procedures concerning the recruitment, selection and development of staff including job descriptions and personnel specifications used for recruitment purposes

* Policies and procedures giving effect to the NICCY’s commitment to equality of opportunity - Equal Opportunities Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy
* Learning and development policies
* Policies for regulating the conduct of staff and dealing with their concerns - grievance policy, disciplinary policy, Code of Conduct, JCNC constitution, facilities agreement.
* Policies for the protection of NICCY staff and others - Health and Safety Policy, evacuation procedure, Smoking policy, Managing Absence policy.

This information will not include information about particular members of staff and other individuals. Other information and guidance on staff terms and conditions of employment can be found in the NICS Staff Handbook which is available from the DFP website.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE**

NICCY’s complaint’s procedure can be found on the website. This document contains information on how to raise a complaint about our Publications Scheme. The Commission also undertakes regular customer surveys, which are available on request from the Secretariat.

**RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND PERSONAL DATA POLICIES**

NICCY’s website contains dedicated Freedom of Information pages. The pages include the Policies and Procedures for responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts and the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. NICCY has a Records Management Policy and this is available on request from Corporate Services

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| **CLASS OF INFORMATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | **AVAILABILITY** |
| *Minutes and Agendas of meetings* | A comprehensive record of NICCY proceedings. *(Some of the information in this class is derived from documents considered to contain exempt information. See Section 5 ‘Exempt Information’ above. For example, this class may include information provided in confidence).*  | On request |
| *NICCY Policies and Procedures*  | NICCY’s policies and procedures which apply to all staff subcontractors, and volunteers. These documents define the way NICCY carries on its affairs. | On request |
| *Information on Staff*  | Information on staff including committee members. Information on membership of other public bodies or representation of NICCY on such bodies. *(Some of the information in this class is derived from documents considered to contain exempt information. See Section 5 ‘Exempt Information’ above. For example, this class may include personal data or information).* | On request |
| *Code of Conduct for staff* | The Code of Conduct which staff operate within. *(Some of the information in this class is derived from documents considered to contain exempt information. See Section 5 ‘Exempt Information’ above. For example, this class may include information protected under legal professional privilege).* | On request |
| *Attendance Records*  | Records of Staff attendance rates, including committee attendance at relevant meetings. *(Some of the information in this class is derived from documents considered to contain exempt information. See Section 5 ‘Exempt Information’ above. For example, this class may include personal data or information).*  | On request |

**LISTS AND REGISTERS**

**ASSET REGISTERS AND INFORMATION ON THE ASSET REGISTER**

NICCY’s only capital assets are its IT equipment and furniture and fittings. Information on its assets are reported each year in the notes to its Financial Statements, contained in the Annual Report which is available on NICCY’s website.

**DISCLOSURE LOGS, INCLUDING THE REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY, ANY REGISTER OF INTEREST KEPT AND OTHER LISTS REQUIRED BY LAW**

NICCY maintains a Register of Interests and a Gifts and Hospitality Register, which are inspected annually by the NIAO and available for public inspection.

**THE SERVICES WE OFFER**

NICCY’s full legislation is set out in [**The Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003**](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2003/439/contents/made)

STATUTORY DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSIONER

**Article 6(1) of the 2003 Order established the Commissioner’s principal aim as follows:**

**“*To Safeguard and Promote the Rights and Best Interests of Children and Young Persons*”**

The Commissioner’s paramount consideration shall be the rights of the child or young person.

The Commissioner shall have regard in particular, to the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child or young person (considered in light of his/her age and understanding).

The Commissioner shall have regard to the importance of the role of parents in the upbringing and development of their children; and any relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

STATUTORY DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSIONER

**Article 7 of the 2003 Order outline the duties of the Commissioner which are:**

* To promote an understanding of the rights of children and young persons;
* To promote an awareness of the importance of those rights and a respect among children and young persons for the rights of others;
* To promote an awareness of matters relating to the best interests of children and young persons;
* To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice relating to the rights and welfare of children and young persons.
* To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for children and young persons by relevant authorities.
* To advise government and relevant authorities on matters concerning the rights or best interests of children and young persons.
* To take reasonable steps to ensure that children and young persons and their carers are made aware of the functions of the Commissioner, the location of her office and the ways in which they may communicate with the Commissioner.
* To take reasonable steps to ensure that children and young persons are encouraged to communicate with the Commissioner
* To take reasonable steps to ensure that the content of any matter published by the Commissioner takes account, so far as practicable, of the age, understanding and usual language of any children or young person by whom it is intended that such matter will be read and of the effect of any disabilities they may have;
* To take reasonable steps to ensure that the views of children and young persons and their parents are sought concerning the exercise by the Commissioner of her functions;
* To take reasonable steps to ensure that the services of the Commissioner are, so far as practicable, made available to children and young persons in the locality in which they live.

**Articles 8-15 outline the Commissioner’s general powers which are to:**

* Undertake, commission or provide financial or other assistance for, research or educational activities concerning the rights or best interests of children and young persons or the exercise of her functions.
* After consultation with such bodies as she thinks appropriate, issue guidance on best practice in relation to any matter concerning the rights or best interests of children or young persons.
* For the purpose of any of her functions, conduct such investigations as she considers necessary or expedient.
* Compile information, provide advice and publish any matter concerning the rights and best interests of children and young persons, including the outcome of any research or investigation and any advice provided by the Commissioner.
* Make representations or recommendations to any body or person about any matter concerning the rights and best interests of children and young persons.
* Conduct general reviews of advocacy, complaint, inspection and whistle blowing arrangements of relevant authorities.
* Review advocacy, complaint, inspection and whistle blowing arrangements of relevant authorities in individual cases.
* Provide assistance with complaints to relevant authorities.
* Conduct investigations of complaints against relevant authorities
* Bring, intervene in or assist in legal proceedings.

**ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

Under this heading is a wide range of information and advisory materials covering all aspects of the Commission’s remit. Most of this material is available free of charge in hard copy. In the case of more recent publications, they are also available on our website. A small number of publications have been priced. A charge may also be made where multiple copies of publications are requested. All current publications are available from our website.

**MEDIA RELEASES**

All news releases and a selection of speeches made by the Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive are contained on the Commission’s website.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

You can contact us in a number of different ways

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Equality House

7-9 Shaftesbury Square

Belfast

Co. Antrim

BT2 7DP

**Tel: 028 9031 1616**

e-mail: info@niccy.org

Fax: **028 9031 4545**